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When it comes to confidence Greyson has it in spades.

According to parents Dan and Samoa, the 11-year-old from Greater Geelong is “ridiculously social” and “he just wants to get out and have fun”.

Greyson loves school, dancing and music and for 4 years he’s been part of a junior league tenpin bowling team – a sport he fell in love with after trying it at an All-Abilities expo.

He also “loves anything Christmas”.

‘Greyson would wear a Christmas jumper every day if we let him,’ Dan said laughing.

‘Even though his birthday’s in September, his theme was Christmas,’ Samoa added. ‘Anyone who knows him, knows he just loves it.’

To Greyson, there are no barriers. It’s all about getting out and having fun, but his introduction to the world had his first-time parents unsure what the future would hold.

‘Greyson spent 3 months in the hospital’s neonatal intensive care unit,’ Samoa said. ‘It was pretty scary. We were also building our house. It was an intense time.’

With 2 other children, Kingsley, 5, and Elowyn, 5 months, the NDIS has been a great support for the family.

‘What’s worked best is the circle of support we’ve been able to build around Greyson,’ Dan said. ‘He’s got a great team of allied health professionals and support workers.

‘We all work together and meet regularly to discuss how he’s going – what’s working, what’s not and if there’s anything else we can do to support him. It’s just been fantastic.’

The couple are also grateful for the techniques Greyson’s therapists have taught them.

‘They’ve all made a huge difference, helping us to understand his needs so we can all better support him,’ Samoa said. ‘Cognitively, Greyson knows what’s going on, but he can’t tell us. Everything we do is really trial and error to try and figure it out.

Samoa said Greyson’s occupational therapist taught them one simple visual concept, “First,

Then”.

‘When it came to doing tasks, Greyson had a short attention span. He’d get frustrated, but just using the “First, Then” concept with visuals and repeating it was all he needed.

‘Now when we say, “First this” he signs “Then this.” Something so simple was super helpful,’ Samoa added.

Greyson’s physiotherapist has impressed the couple too.

‘Greyson’s feet sometimes roll in, making it harder for him to walk. Just the support she provides, the consistency – she’s always got him trying new things and if it doesn’t work, she’ll find something else,’ Dan said.

The couple are also grateful for NDIS funding which allows them to choose therapies to meet Greyson’s needs.

‘Any hospital appointments make Greyson anxious,’ Samoa said. ‘Now, he can have most of his appointments where he feels more comfortable and relaxed.

‘It also means his therapists can see him in action, including in his regular environment. They can suggest strategies and provide equipment to help him manage day-to-day life.’

Greyson is also supported to develop his life skills, to help build his independence.

‘He’s actually learning to cook. He loves it and he’s doing well,’ Samoa said. ‘He shops with his support worker for all the ingredients; he’s learned how to scan all the groceries at the checkout, which he loves. Then when they’re back home, he’s shown how to cook.’

As for the future, Dan and Samoa feel confident their son’s NDIS support will lead to positive outcomes, ensuring he will be able to lead his own active and inclusive life.

‘All we want is for Greyson to become as independent as possible, so when he’s older he can confidently lead his own life and make his own decisions,’ Samoa said.

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